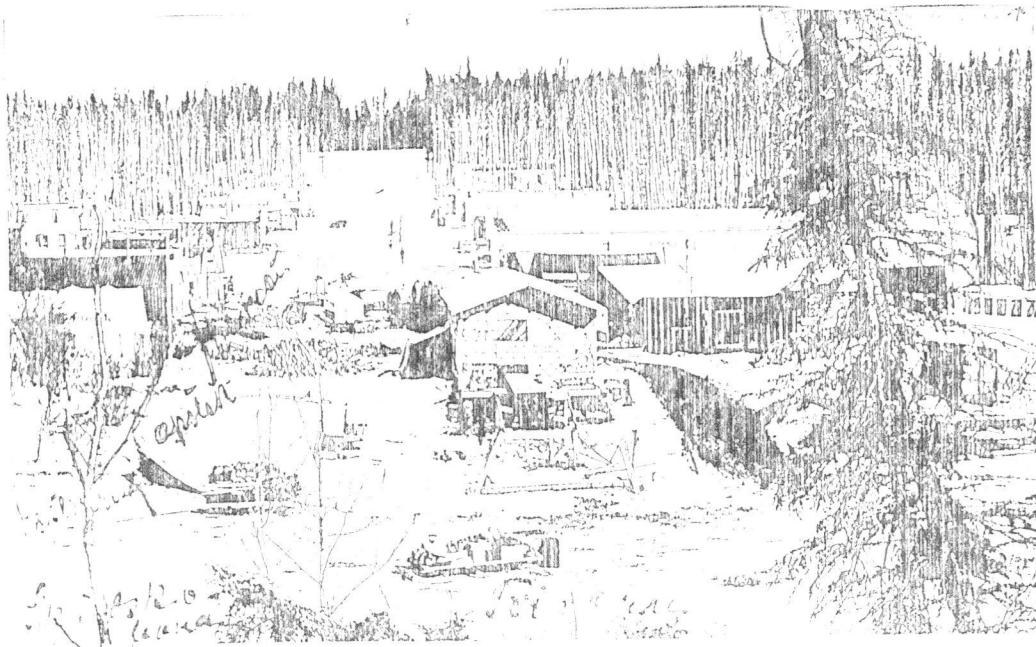


# Mirror Landing

1912 - 1916

California.

As remembered by Birgit Hult





Mrs. Hult & Hans Carl  
Taken in Sweden 1910



Birgit, Hans Carl & Lars  
Taken in Edmonton 1912

According to family records the Hults arrived in Mirror Landing in September 1912 and left in the winter of 1916. Mr. Carl Henrick Hult, a civil engineer, was from Malmo, Sweden. In spite of his aristocratic rearing by his German grandparents, the Von Vosses, Mr. Hult was said to be less than a gentleman. While living in Mirror Landing he signed himself as a merchant, tended a trap line and was in some way involved with a pool hall operation.

Mrs. Signe Maria Hagstrom Hult was from Osmo, Sweden. Mrs. Hult was a lady. She played the piano well, sang not quite as well and had the forbidden desire to be an actress. She had a high school education in Languages and Mathematics before being employed in a Stockholm business.

With the Hults were their daughter Birgit Hilda Elvira aged 4 yrs., and son Hans Carl, aged 2 yrs. Birgit was born in Port Arthur, Ont.; Carl in Sweden when the Hults made a return visit. While living in Mirror Landing their second son, Lars Christopher, was born.

Upon arrival, the Hults met and became good friends with Mr. Joseph Gauthier, a French Canadian Logger, and Mrs. Gauthier who was from the American South. Mrs. Hult and Mrs. Gauthier swapped English lessons for piano lessons and in time grew to think of each other as sisters. The Gauthier children, Rene, Joe Jr. and Frederic, were playmates for Birgit, Hans and Lars. Mr. Gauthier owned and operated a sawmill.



The Hult family lived in a log house which was described as having a plank floor, with a living room at the front, a bedroom to the right and side, and a kitchen at the back. The veranda, which extended across the front of the house, looked over a broad flower border, and a large vegetable garden. At the end of the veranda, near the front door was a flag pole. At the back was a "loo."

The Hult grandchildren still have items from the log house; a Swedish - English dictionary 1903, "the trunk", household linens and silverware, oil & water colour paintings from Sweden, wooden inlay pictures (parquetry ) from Edmonton, a large photo of Birgit from Port Arthur, vases and Birgit's doll.

Mrs. Hult, always homesick for Sweden, clung tenaciously to Swedish traditions. On Swedish national holidays the family would dress in ethnic costumes, and fly the Swedish flag under the Union Jack. At Easter the family would eat hot cross buns, stuffed with Swedish Marzipan and soaked in warm milk. The Easter table "flower" arrangement was budding birch branches decorated with dyed chicken feathers and wooden chicken ornaments. Birgit remembered Midsummers as a time the children stayed up late to drink eggnog on the veranda. She also remembered her father travelling to Athabasca to fetch gifts from Sweden which were opened Christmas Eve. It was a dangerous trip with the threat of being overtaken by cold or timber wolves. Both Birgit and Hans were home schooled in Swedish.

# District The Tourist

istrict and the land of midnight twilight.

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SMITH, ALBERTA PHONE 829-3777

## "Smith Mirror"

SMITH IS ONLY 10 YEARS  
OLD ACCORDING TO P.O.

A bridge was built across  
the Athabasca River in 1912  
and 13, and at first according  
to legend, people were so  
scared of it that only one  
train car at a time would be  
pulled across it. Even the  
horses shied from it so the  
work had to be done by shovel  
and wheel-barrow.

Gauthier had a saw mill  
on the north bank of the Atha-  
basca River. There was also  
a box factory nearby. They  
even had bootleggers in  
those days, and it was a  
great joke among the natives  
how the "King Pin" would  
use evasive methods to fool  
the police, while others sup-  
plied the liquor to the rail-  
road crews.

In 1915 Smith's first hotel  
was built. Bill Holden can  
be seen in the picture. Smith  
was known postal wise as  
Mirror Landing until 1957  
and also even today the  
Forestry keeps the name on  
their tower north of the  
river.

## OLD TIMERS

Paul Stark who lives 7  
miles west of Smith came to  
Mirror Landing in 1907 and  
worked both on the boats  
and freighters, transporting  
freight overland from Moose  
Portage to Mirror Landing  
and thence to Saulteaux Land-  
ing, 17 miles from Mirror  
Landing where the boats  
would carry the goods into  
Lesser Slave Lake area and  
townsite. Paul recalls the  
R.C.M.P. Barracks, H. B.  
Warehouses and the saloon  
which was larger than the  
present day hotel by far.

When the railway came  
in 1913 Paul retired to his  
present abode, which used  
to be a stopping place for  
his team during the height  
of his freighting days.

## OLD TIMERS

Orval Hayes Sr. was be-  
lieved to have been in the  
freighting business in Atha-  
basca near the turn of the  
century. In 1920 Orval came  
to Smith area and homesteaded. Later he trapped and  
returned in to the 30's to  
homestead on ranch settle-  
ment. Where in 1935 Orval  
Hayes Sr. ran the post office  
out at the ranch, 10 miles  
from Smith on the Athabasca  
Highway. It eventually was  
engulfed by Mirror Landing  
and Grosmont P.O. in 1954.

## Fawcett Lake Resort

FISHING... CAMPING... CABINS  
NORTHERN PIKE... PERCH... WALLEYE  
GAS... OIL... GROCERIES  
FISHING EQUIPMENT  
BOATS AND MOTORS

## SUPPORT

YOUR LOCAL CLEANER

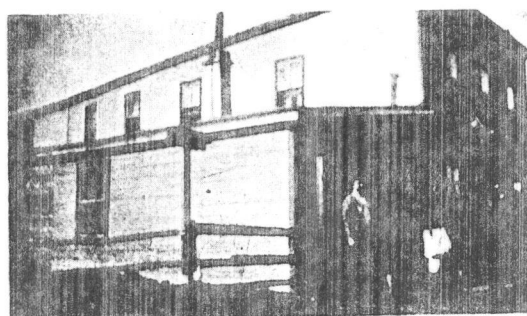
BETTY BARTHEL  
Agent for Irish Fur House  
PHONE 829-3864

W. P. LaFRANCE

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GROCERIES - SCHOOL SUPPLIES - HARDWARE -  
DRY GOODS - GAS, - OIL - BUILDING MATERIAL,  
FEED - PROPANE

PHONE 829-3778 SMITH



SMITH'S FIRST HOTEL - BURNED IN 1952.



SMITH

## SMITH SHOWER

A bridal shower was held  
at the Roman Catholic Club  
House for Sharon Meyn on  
July 28, whose wedding took  
place Aug. 5 in Athabasca.  
Several amusing games  
were played followed by the  
opening of gifts and a deli-  
cious lunch. We all wish  
Sharon much happiness.

Birgit's memories of Mirror Landing reflected her young age. She remembered in spring picking new nettles for soup, the first green vegetable of the year. Later in the year the family picked mushrooms and berries. She remembered when Rene Gauthier was sent to boarding school in Edmonton. Both the girls remembered sitting in a boat in the middle of a lake waiting for a forest fire to pass by. Later, they saw their fathers black with soot from head to toe as if they were coal miners, and the black spines on the landscape were a forest once stood across the Athabasca.

Birgit had no memory of any medical help. Her aching joints were treated with hot cloths. A condition which was later diagnosed as rheumatic fever. Lars was born with yellow jaundice, and was very ill for many months.

Birgit's only memory of community recreation were dances at the pool hall. Mrs. Hult, who played the piano, always remembered: "The loggers who came from the bush with their heavy boots, and some of them so light on their feet." Birgit remembered the Native Indians who had dressed in layers to keep warm. As the evening warmed, the Natives peeled their clothes like peeling layers of an onion.

The people of Mirror Landing looked upon the North West Mounted Police with disfavour. On the one hand, the Mounties were obliged to enforce laws that did not apply to the North. Mr. Gauthier was fined for building a brush fire on Sunday. Another time they confiscated a venison because the hunter was sharing it with his neighbours. What was a family to do with a whole venison with no way to preserve



Trusting you will give this petition your favourable consideration at your earliest opportunity.

NAME	OCCUPATION
George Long	C. L. S.
Leon Lannond	Barber
E. P. Garton	Butcher
J. P. Lavelle	Blacksmith
H. H. Morton	Engineer
Doc Wilson	Veterinary
J. M. Bird	Plat
Elizabeth Thomas	Restaurateur
H. C. McMillan	Ferryman
A. A. Ferguson	Clark
Eliza Cuccione	
J. H. Johnson	Carthagator
Chas. M. Phail	Teamster
J. H. Cochran	Clock
J. T. Smith	Contractor
Samuel Porter	Carpenter
W. J. Reid	Merchants
J. L. Jones	Baker
L. E. Rice	Real Estate
J. R. Benson	Electrician
Alex. Lismanaw	Restaurateur
John Moisson	Pool Hall
J. O. Regan	Operator
John M. Rae	Livery Stable
A. B. D. ...	Farmer
P. H. ...	Miscellaneous
J. D. ...	Merchant
Wm. Carruthers	Carpenter
R. ...	Transportation
C. C. Barber	Transportation
M. J. Locklin	Merchant
M. J. ...	2-Box ...
M. J. ...	E. D. B. C. ...
C. ...	Druggist
W. R. Barber	Engineer
E. C. ...	Engineer
Wm. Barber	Carpenter & Contractor
R. A. Harington	Druggist
D. ...	C. C.
J. ...	
J. ...	
M. ...	Blacksmith
J. ...	Laborer
E. ...	Mill Wright

Document.

will be brought there instead of Athabasca Landing as formerly —

Westlock: — A fatal accident occurred on Tuesday, five miles south of Smith, resulting in the death of Robert, the 12 year old son of Henry Willis. The boy, along with some other children, was sliding down a steep embankment on skis when he fell on a sharp snag which penetrated his side. Death resulted before medical aid could reach him. The funeral was conducted by the Reverend Mr. McLean of Westlock in the presence of the immediate neighbours of the family.

To the Minister of Municipal Affairs of the Province  
of Alberta:

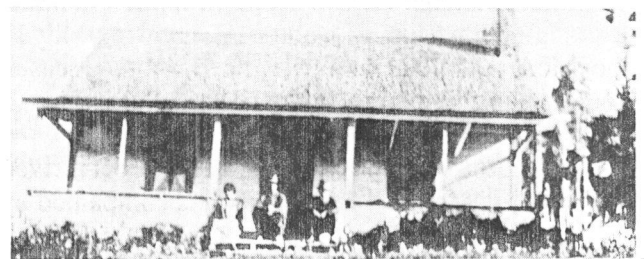
The petition of the undersigned sheweth:

(1) That our petitioners are desirous that you should authorize the Council of the village to incur a debt on behalf of the village to an amount not exceeding three thousand dollars (\$3000.00) to be used for the grading of streets, erecting of sidewalks, purchase of water tank and fire apparatus, and street lights; in accordance with the resolution of the Council passed on the sixth day of April, 1914.

(2) That your petitioners constitute a majority of the electors of the village who are at the date of the petition resident within the village or within two miles of the boundaries thereof.

H. J. Gehlin  
 C. H. Hunt  
 C. W. A. Barker  
 Edwin Appleton  
 J. A. McManis  
 E. D. R. Vins  
 J. D. Robertson  
 G. A. Smith & Co.  
 W. D. Leary  
 W. D. Thompson  
 W. B. C. C. C.  
 Leon Darnworth  
 J. D. Polan

Document.



Marcella and Grant Knapp's house at old Mirror Landing overlooking Slave River, 1919.



the meat? The solution was to invite the neighbours to dinner and send them home with leftovers. On the other hand , the Mounties took advantage of their position. Stories circulated about indiscretions occurring while they transported prisoners southward. Also they took liquor from the Natives and drank it themselves. Ultimately the population worked against law enforcement and hindered the Mounties whenever possible.

As time passed the population of Mirror Landing declined. Mr. Hult joined the Canadian Military, and because of his knowledge of the German language, he was posted to a German prisoner- of- war camp. In 1916, Mrs. Hult and the children, among the last to leave, left by sleigh to stay in Edmonton. In August the family moved to Winnipeg, and later to New Westminster. Once again they met up with the Gauthiers.

The friendship formed by Mrs. Hult and Mrs. Gauthier lasted until her death. Rene and Joe Jr. continued to write Mrs. Hult and Birgit until their deaths. This family story has been compiled by Birgit's daughter, Jean Elvira Male, of White Rock B.C., in collaboration with Joe Gauthier of Spokane Washington, . and Rene Gauthier Moys of Redding, California.



Post Card from Sweden

1915

Åh du! Kära du! Tack för  
 din bref i går af 4/5 ma  
 omvårdnad. Just i går  
 sånd vi af Huset. Långt  
 hoppas jag det ordentligt  
 högt. Rådbrar fram, såvida  
 det ej kallas illant som vi  
 följt viktiga af en kunda  
 såvida bradant. O Med  
 linn af för en rikskam  
 såja följde askar det. Du  
 det från oss ej är riktigt  
 ordentligt förstår du.  
 Brar för, hoppas bara  
 så ordentligt af det i dom  
 det du dig är från kam  
 så i vi andra rikskam  
 du underättat väl så fort  
 rikskam kommit från  
 i dag bekräftar Linn. Tack  
 lund. Såvida är för rikskam  
 så om rikskam. Tack  
 så om rikskam. Tack  
 så om rikskam. Tack  
 så om rikskam. Tack



Mrs. C. W. Walt

Misses Landings  
 via  
 Edmonton

Alta

Canada

FFC  
 97.07